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Turco-Israeli Partnership in a Tough Neighborhood

Joseph M. Codispoti
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Foreword

Optimism for a more peaceful post-Cold War era has been tempered by greater international instability and the weakening of some nation-states. Former client states, no longer moderated by the influences of their previous superpower patrons, resort to violent suppressions of political opponents and ethnic minorities. Former nations divide along ethnic lines, often spawning new political divisions that are neither stable nor sustainable. Perhaps nowhere are these dynamics more evident than in the "arc of crisis," a region extending from the Balkans through Asia Minor to the Caucasus and Central Asia. Turkey, due in part to her geographic location in the heart of this unstable region and her newly assertive foreign policy, has been disproportionately impacted by this post-Cold War disorder.

In this study Lt Col Joseph M. Codispoti, USAF, describes an emerging partnership between two long-time allies of the United States—Turkey and Israel. On the surface this Muslim-Jewish partnership seems unlikely, particularly on the fringes of the Arab world. A closer examination, however, reveals a number of mutual security interests and a shared sense of isolation at the crossroads of Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Colonel Codispoti begins his study by examining relations between Turkey and Israel from the founding of Israel in 1948 through the 1980s. While relations vacillated during these early years, the foundation was built for deeper and more significant ties. The advent of post-Cold War instability in the arc of crisis served as the catalyst for growing and extensive political, military, and economic links between the unlikely partners. This study concludes by addressing future possibilities for and barriers to the emerging Turco-Israeli partnership, as well as its far-reaching potential to bring stability or conflict to the region.

The Turco-Israeli partnership has important national security implications for the United States. Working in tandem, these allies can promote the American vision for the region by fostering democracy, peace, and free markets in the region. This study should prompt critical analysis and

discussion of a significant and relevant topic and, as with all Maxwell Papers, is provided in the spirit of academic freedom, open debate, and serious consideration of the issues. We encourage your responses.

DAVID F. MacGHEE, JR.
Major General, USAF
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About the Author

Lt Col Joseph M. Codispoti graduated from James Madison University in 1980 and was commissioned in the United States Air Force in 1981 upon completion of Officer Training School. He is a career supply officer who has served at all levels, including two tours with the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). After completing an initial base-level tour, Colonel Codispoti was selected to attend the Air Force Institute of Technology resident graduate program, where he completed his master's degree in logistics management in September 1984. Following graduation, he completed a foreign military sales tour with the Royal Saudi Air Force, a tour in Balikesir, Turkey, and a tour with DLA. Colonel Codispoti returned to the base level at England Air Force Base (AFB), Louisiana, where he served as acting Supply Squadron commander during the Gulf War. He was recognized as Company Grade Officer of the Year and Tactical Air Command Junior Supply Manager of the Year for 1991. While at Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Colonel Codispoti authored the initial Air Force Lean Logistics test plan, as well as the first Hazardous Materiel Pharmacy implementation plan. He then served as chief of supply and Commander, 65th Supply Squadron, at Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal. Prior to attending Air War College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, he served at Headquarters, DLA, as a program manager for DLA's warfighting assessment tool, the Integrated Consumable Item Support model. After graduation from Air War College in 2000, Colonel Codispoti was assigned to the Pentagon as Chief, Warfighter Team, Supply Policy and Procedures Division, Headquarters, United States Air Force.

The Turco-Israeli Partnership

The demise of the Soviet Union and her hold over Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia was generally welcomed in much of the world and most certainly in the West. The initial optimism, however, has been dampened by the instabilities caused by the numerous fledgling states spawned by this demise. Perhaps no nation has been directly impacted more than the Republic of Turkey, which sits in relative isolation at the hub of an "arc of crisis" extending from the Balkans through the Anatolian peninsula to the Caucasus (and perhaps Central Asia).[1]

Driven by insecurity in this region and by growing self-confidence, Turkey has accepted a regional power role characterized by an aggressive foreign policy—unprecedented since the birth of the new republic in 1923.[2] Gone are Kemal Atatürk's "peace at home, peace abroad" internal orientations in Turkey's new regionalist orientation.

Perhaps the most surprising result of Turkey's aggressive foreign policy is her partnership with Israel. On the surface it would seem an odd partnership. One would imagine pressures from the Islamic world would be enough to deter Muslim Turkey from reaching out to a Jewish state. A peek below the surface, however, exposes many common interests and orientations crucial to the security of both nations. Both Turkey and Israel are pro-West, pro-American secular democracies. They face similar security threats that drive them both to strong antiterrorist and anti-Islamic fundamentalist orientations.[3] This paper surveys Turco-Israeli relations from the founding of the state of Israel to the present and examines the implications of the current relationship for US and regional security interests.

Early Relations

Turkey's relations with the Jewish people extend to the very beginnings of migration from Central Asia, when pockets of Jewry dating from Roman times inhabited the Anatolian peninsula. More recently, the Ottoman Turks harbored Jews escaping the Spanish Inquisition in the fifteenth century, and the Republic of Turkey welcomed Jewish refugees from Nazi Europe. The Turks developed a special relationship

with the Jews, treating them with much more tolerance than they did Armenian, Greek, and other minorities.[4]

Turkey's inaugural act with the fledgling Jewish nation, however, did not bode well for future ties. In 1947 Turkey was among the dissenters in a United Nations (UN) vote for Israeli statehood. That position was influenced by two main factors: deference to the Muslim world and a perception that Zionism and communism were one and the same. The latter led Turks to believe the new state would align with the Soviet Union and would plant communism firmly in the Middle East.[5] By 1949, however, Turkey followed the lead of most Western nations in recognizing Israel and exchanging ministers.[6] Turkey's recognition was the first from a Muslim nation and, as such, a very significant statement.[7]

The earliest ties between the nations of Turkey and Israel had security implications in the form of intelligence sharing, which began secretly in 1952.[8] Israel's first minister to Turkey, Eliyahu Sasson, aggressively courted the Turks to gain a "window on the Middle East." Since the parties shared a common fear and distrust of the Arabs, the new relationship was mutually beneficial. Intelligence operations grew so rapidly that Ankara soon displaced Cyprus as the principal sphere of intelligence operations for Israel.[9] Trade between Turkey and Israel began to blossom in the early 1950s when West Germany sought within Europe for cheaper imports. Faced with the loss of her primary trading partner, Turkey turned to Spain, Yugoslavia, and Israel to fill the void.[10] By 1953 bilateral commerce had expanded significantly and Israeli construction companies were helping improve Turkey's infrastructure, to include the construction of military airfields. Even as the political relationship vacillated during the decade, trade remained steady.[11]

On the political side, early Turco-Israeli relations were highly secretive, particularly during the reigns of Adnan Menderes and David Ben-Gurion.[12] The Turks insisted on a low-profile relationship to avoid offending the Arab world. The Israelis, thirsting for recognition in the region, felt the frustration echoed by Ben-Gurion when he complained that "the Turks have always treated us as one treats a mistress, and not as a partner in an openly avowed marriage."[13] Turkey's cautious approach was partly due to her obsession with alleged latent communism

in the Jewish state. The Turks consistently misinterpreted Israeli socialism and relations with the Soviet sphere as indications of communism,[14] in spite of the fact that many of her North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies in Europe were establishing post-war socialist programs.[15] A frustrated Israeli diplomat summed up the situation, commenting that "there is scarcely a Turk in existence capable of distinguishing between Socialism and Communism."[16]

Turkey's vacillating orientation toward the Arab world was another source of strife in early relations. One case was Turkey's pacts with Iraq and Pakistan in 1954, which they described as part of a new *Ostpolitik*. Israel worried that relations with the Arab and Muslim world would turn Turkey from her secular, pro-Western views and might even result in the Turkish army supporting Iraq against the Israelis. Predictably, the Turks interpreted Israeli concern as communist and Zionist opposition to *Ostpolitik*.[17] Economically, Turkish pride restricted what might have been a highly complementary partnership of Israeli "know-how" with Turkish labor and raw materials. Efforts to sell higher-quality Israeli products in Turkey, including military equipment and technologies, were generally quashed. Such imports might have indicated the technical superiority of this tiny, neophyte Jewish nation and bruised the tender ego of a centuries-old, proud people.[18] Israel's first ambassador to Turkey, Maurice Fisher, characterized the fragility of Turco-Israeli relations in 1953:

> Our relations with Turkey have been extremely good of late [but] these good relations could deteriorate overnight, and we should learn from the bitter experience of others. The Turks have yet to achieve a standard by which, in the event of disagreement with another state, they can weigh up the positions of both sides. For them, there exists one sole principle: in any conflict with a foreigner, whether a private individual, a company, or a state, the Turk is always right.[19]

If Israel were to maintain good relations with Turkey she would have to tread lightly.[20]

Arab Relations

While Turco-Arab relations vacillated, Israeli-Arab relations were consistently hostile, erupting in warfare in

1948, 1967, and 1973. The war for independence in 1948 was actually a boon for impending relations between Turkey and Israel. The Turks greatly admired the strength of Israel's war effort and similarly detested the weakness of the Arabs. The Arabs, in turn, were dismayed by Turkey's secularism and pro-Western orientation. Turkey had no shortage of hostile neighbors in the Arab world. Egypt viewed Turkey's support for the United Kingdom (UK) during the Suez crisis as an encroachment on her sovereignty; Syria viewed Turkey's 1938 annexation of the Hatay province as treachery; and Iraq considered Turkey's secularism and relations with Israel as an affront to Islam.[21]

Considering the hostility of the Arab world and the many common interests they shared with the Jewish state, it was perhaps more natural for the Turks to incline toward Israel. Recognizing this inclination and the danger it could pose for them in the region, the Arabs actively tried to discredit Israel in Ankara.[22] In general, any healing with the Arab world (e.g., Turkey's 1954 pact with Baghdad) came at the expense of relations with Israel.[23]

Greek Relations

The Greeks were to the Turks as the Arabs were to the Israelis—hostile neighbors with whom reconciliation seemed nearly impossible. The Greeks further inflamed the relationship by heavily courting the Arab world. They also hypocritically dismissed Turkey as unqualified to play a mediator role in the Middle East due to her ongoing relations with Israel, while neglecting to mention Greece's own relations with the Arabs.[24]

The Israelis, on the other hand, consistently reached out to Greece, only to be rebuffed on each occasion. Like the Turks, the Greeks voted against establishment of a Jewish state in 1947. Unlike the Turks, they vigorously opposed Israel in her 1948 war for independence by imposing transit restrictions for Israeli citizens, voting against Israel in international bodies, and confiscating Jewish-owned property.[25] Undeterred, Ben-Gurion felt strongly that an alliance with Greece was necessary for security in the region. By 1952, however Israel had already defined her relationship with Greece by acknowledging that "the first consid-

eration [in relations with Greece] is to refrain from helping an 'enemy of Israel.'"[26] Israeli-Greek relations have improved little, as evidenced by Shimon Peres's 1985 assertion that "we [Israel] have no difficulty in maintaining good relations with Greece. The difficulties come from Greece, not from Israel."[27] Unlike Turkish relations with the Arab world, Israeli relations with Greece have consistently supported Turco-Israeli ties.

Cyprus

The "Cyprus problem" is an instance of longtime enmity between Greece and Turkey. Cyprus became an independent country in 1960, with treaty provisions and a constitution that provided for joint rule involving Turkish and Greek Cypriots. In July 1974 the Cypriot National Guard, led by officers from the Greek army, seized the government as a step toward unification with Greece. Five days later Turkey invaded the island, citing treaty provisions setting up the independent country, and, within a month, had occupied about 40 percent of the country. Turkish Cypriots later established a separate state on the northern part of the island.

The Cyprus issue became a defining point for Turco-Israeli relations in the 1970s. Israel saw nothing to lose in taking a pro-Turkish stance—her relations with Greece having already deteriorated—and everything to gain in reaching out to Turkey. The Turks hoped Israel could help blunt worldwide criticism of her 1974 occupation, particularly through the Jewish lobby in the United States.

Although they overestimated the power of the Jewish lobby, they nonetheless had quiet support from an officially neutral Israel.[28] As an extension of Greek relations, the Cyprus issue helped solidify Turco-Israeli relations.

Peripheral Pact of 1958

Israel had long wanted a broader "periphery strategy" with Turkey, Iran, and Ethiopia to foster friendly relations on the borders of a hostile Arab world.[29] Common threats and interests propelled Israel and Turkey to launch the Peripheral Pact with Iran, Ethiopia, and Christian enclaves in Sudan. The pact included cooperation agreements in the diplomatic, military, commercial, scientific, and intelligence

areas. The impact on Turco-Israeli relations was positive and significant. Israel helped develop Turkish industry and agriculture, helped construct the Iran-Turkey pipeline, shared sensitive scientific data, and began exporting high technology military equipment. The pact also led to mutual assistance in the UN and from the United States. The complementary relationship of Israeli know-how and Turkish resources and might was finally coming to fruition.[30]

Benefits of Turco-Israeli Relations

Some of the benefits of this seemingly odd relationship have already been addressed. For Israel it was particularly advantageous to claim ties with *any* nation in the region, but her ties to Turkey were fortuitous. Turkey was a non-Arab Muslim partner in a key geographical position. She was also growing in importance through her ties to NATO and the West and through her relative power in the region. Through Turkey, Israel was able to gain access to the West without being formally aligned. She was also able to gain access to US technology investments in Turkey, which she "borrowed" and put to good use in Israel. An example is underground hydrant fueling systems at Turkey's military airfields, which began mysteriously appearing at Israeli airfields in the 1950s. Israel's close ties with the United States gained her credibility with the Turks, who seemed to defer to anything American. As noted by an Israeli diplomat in the early 1950s: "The Turks adopt [unquestioningly] everything the Americans [say]."[31]

The Turks derived benefit from Israeli know-how while building her infrastructure. Most importantly, the Turks gained greater access to the United States via Israel at a time when they needed aid and investment. US regional dominance turned Turkey's attentions to Washington, where the Jewish lobby was already quite strong—a distinct advantage for the Turks.[32]

Both parties gained security from the relationship. Bilateral commerce and military cooperation were the engines that helped them creep from isolation in a hostile neighborhood.[33] Intelligence benefits were also significant for both parties, as Israel gained her window on the Middle East and the Israelis carefully updated the Turks on Israel's political

maneuvering with the West. Mutual voting pacts at the UN, including Israel's support for Turkey's election to the Security Council, were also an outgrowth of the relationship.[34]

Ebb and Flow

Like typical bilateral relations between nation-states, Turco-Israeli relations have experienced high and low points. A cooling trend was generally evident from the start of the Six-Day War in 1967 through the first years of the Turgut Özal era in the early 1980s (Özal served as prime minister and then president from 1983 until his death in 1993). The primary cause was Turkey's vacillating interests in the Arab world. Showing more *Ostpolitik* than Peripheral Pact tendencies, the Turks began to reach out to Arabs in the early 1960s. The most obvious manifestation of this new course was Turkey's open support of Arab positions vis-à-vis the Palestinian cause. Searching for supporters after concluding Cyprus treaties, the Turks had hoped to trade their support of the Palestinians for Arab support of the Turkish cause. The Turks also turned to their Arab neighbors in hopes of healing wounds[35] and improving trade in the region. The Arab orientation proved disappointing. Arab support for a Turkish Cyprus was never realized—partly due to Greece's overtures to the Arab world, nagging political friction, and the comparison of Turkey's occupation of Cyprus with Israel's occupation of Palestine—and Turkey's trade with the Arab world remained negligible.[36] Nonetheless, the Turks bowed to Arab pressure during the 1973 oil embargo and further distanced themselves from Israel.[37]

Israel's conduct of the Six-Day War brought relations to an all-time low. Showing interest in the welfare of the Muslim world, the Turks voiced displeasure over Israel's aggressive action against Egypt, Syria, and Iraq.[38] This curious quote from a Turkish official aptly illustrates Turkey's concern and the fragility of her ego: "Your 1967 victory was too brilliant, it is too prolonged, it affects too many Holy Places sacred to Islam. That victory represents the superiority of the European State, and European thinking, over the local Near Eastern elements to which we belong, even

if we proclaim otherwise. That must have a detrimental effect on our relations."[39]

A third source of friction was the "Jerusalem Law of 1980," in which Israel declared Jerusalem as her capital. Turkey joined her neighbors in sharp reaction to the move by scaling back her representation in Israel and consistently supporting anti-Israel resolutions submitted by her neighbors in world fora.[40]

The Özal era was a turning point for Turco-Israeli relations in the 1980s. Özal's efforts to open up Turkey's economy and boost exports gave impetus to a budding economic relationship. Although trade with the Arab world had grown considerably during the 1970s, the level of trade was modest, at best, and completely inadequate to support Turkey's export needs.[41] Trade with Israel had been negligible since the late 1950s, but Israel's virtual isolation in the region represented a potentially lucrative new market for Turkey's exports.[42]

Özal also laid the groundwork for a more aggressive foreign policy, and Israel was a natural target for extended relations. Her isolation, pro-West and secular orientations, and, perhaps most importantly, friendly relations with the United States complemented Özal's desire for closer US ties. Although formal relations were still relatively cool throughout the 1980s and trade remained negligible, doors were opening for a broader relationship.[43]

The 1990s brought two significant breakthroughs in Turco-Israeli relations. The first was the establishment of full relations and the exchange of ambassadors in 1991.[44] This single act brought legitimacy to a 42-year tacit relationship and opened the door for more open and extensive ties. The second breakthrough was the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Declaration of Principles (DoP) in 1993. The DoP removed a longstanding barrier for the Turks, in particular, and helped launch a flurry of cooperative activity.[45]

In 1993 the two countries signed a security cooperation agreement and joined the United States in marketing agricultural goods to the Central Asian republics. Turkish foreign minister Hikmet Cetin also made the first ministerial visit to Israel that year. In 1994 Israeli president Ezer Weizman met Turkish president Süleyman Demirel and a host

of economic, political, and business leaders in Ankara—the first-ever presidential visit to Turkey. The favor was returned later in the year when Turkish prime minister Tansu Ciller visited Israel (and the Palestinians).[46] The relationship was solidified further with a military training agreement and a free trade accord in 1996.[47] The warming trend of the Özal era and the post-Cold War era had formed a foundation for yet closer ties and had significantly transformed the geopolitical arena in Turkey's "near abroad."

Budding Partnership

Perhaps the most fruitful aspect of the Turco-Israeli partnership has been military relations, which receive strong support from a particularly vital constituency in Turkey—the military establishment. Since signing a military cooperation agreement in 1996, the two sides have held biannual meetings to nurture the partnership.[48] Port calls and visits by military chiefs and defense officials further cement ties. The air forces train jointly at Turkey's expansive ranges, the armies train in the areas of counterterrorism and border control, and the navies conduct joint search and rescue exercises in the eastern Mediterranean.[49]Intelligence sharing has proceeded uninterrupted since the late 1940s, but arrangements were expanded and formalized in 1996. Both countries fight terrorism and fear the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Syria, Iraq, and Iran. The intelligence arrangements, which allegedly include Israeli helicopter operations from Turkish bases, are aimed at stemming these common and exceedingly dangerous threats.[50]

Military equipment sales and joint production ventures have expanded dramatically since 1996, fueled in part by Israel's market needs and Turkey's desire for alternatives to American and European suppliers, both of whom attach human rights demands and other political strings to sales.[51] Turkey is in the midst of a $150-billion military modernization program over 25 years, and Israel has moved out to stake her claim in that market. Israeli contracts include a $100-million deal to upgrade 48 F–5 advanced trainers (with Singapore Technology Aerospace); a

$632-million deal to upgrade 54 F–4E fighters to the Phantom 2000 configuration; the development of the Arrow antiballistic missile system (with the United States); the upgrade of M–60 tanks and the sale of one thousand Merkava Mark III tanks; the sale of Popeye 1 air-to-surface missiles; and joint production of Popeye 2 missiles.[52]

Israel is aggressively seeking to further expand her military-industrial partnership with Turkey, offering sales and production arrangements for rocket-carrying unmanned aerial vehicles, sea-to-sea missiles, the Homa ballistic missile defense system, early warning aircraft, attack helicopters, long-range missiles, patrol aircraft, and other military equipment.[53] Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak illustrated the importance of continued partnership by personally phoning his Turkish counterpart, Bulent Ecevit, to champion Israel's joint entry for the lucrative $4-billion attack helicopter program.[54] Equipment sales are helping an ailing defense industry in Israel—sales to Turkey in 1998 were $1.5 billion—and bolstering Turkey's military technology base through co-production.[55]

The partnership has also helped fill geopolitical voids for both sides. As previously mentioned, the partnership linked two isolated countries with common security threats and foreign policy orientations. Although Prime Ministers Barak and Ecevit call the ties a relationship "for peace, not for war," the willingness of both countries to use force in support of vital interests (e.g., counterterrorism) is served by the partnership.[56] The partnership may also serve to stem the WMD threat. There is some contention that Israeli jets use Turkey's ranges to practice dry run attacks against Iran's nuclear facilities, a scheme Israel has employed in the past against Iraq's Osirak reactor.[57] There is also speculation that Turkey is building an air base exclusively for Israel's use, presumably to launch lower-risk strikes on Iran from Turkish soil.[58]

Given Israel's aggressive ballistic missile defense program, her proven capability to strike enemy nuclear facilities, and her suspected nuclear program with ballistic missile, submarine, and cruise missile delivery platforms, could Israel be providing a nuclear umbrella and WMD defense capability for Turkey?[59] Such an arrangement is neither unlikely nor implausible.

Water access is a geopolitical issue that is bringing Turkey and Israel together. Turkey is the only country in the region with a plentiful supply, and Israel is in need of a stable supplementary source.[60] The two sides are discussing direct delivery of water from the Manavgat River to Israel via undersea pipeline, super tanker, or titanic "Medusa" bags.[61] Turkey has, in fact, invested $125 million in infrastructure, including pumps, a treatment facility, and sea-going tanker terminals, to support the super tanker scheme. With this infrastructure, Turkey can satisfy 10 percent of Israel's current annual water consumption. Although the Israelis are concerned about dependence on a foreign source for such a strategic resource, experts are recommending the plan to Prime Minister Barak as a less costly alternative to desalinization.[62] As early as 1994, Shimon Peres and Hikmet Cetin discussed mutual strategies for Central Asia.[63] The Turco-Israeli partnership is beneficial for both sides in that region. Turkey has opened access to the region for Israel, while Israeli technology and know-how has enhanced the attractiveness of Turkish products in the region. Both find expanded markets for their agricultural products. Perhaps most important, both have an interest in limiting Russian and Iranian influence in Central Asia.

The new partnership also has ramifications for relations with Europe and NATO. As an associate member to the European Union (EU), Israel actively lobbied for the customs agreement with Turkey.[64] The Turks hope their new strategic partner can help influence Turkey's persistent bid for full EU membership or, more realistically, influence the United States to keep the pressure on her European allies.[65] Turkey also perceives that her value as a NATO partner has diminished with the demise of the Soviet Union.[66] A security partnership with Israel provides a vital ally with common interests in a potentially hostile region.

The budding partnership counters Greek forays in the Middle East that have threatened both Turkey and Israel. Greece and Syria signed a strategic pact in 1990 and a military pact in 1995, which included landing rights for Syrian aircraft.[67] The Greeks also provide training to the Armenian military and have considered an economic pact with Armenia and Iran. Furthermore, Greece's foreign

minister called for an "anti-Turkish bloc" in 1996—including Greece, Syria, Bulgaria, Russia, Armenia, Iraq, and Iran—to stifle Turkish influence and sow internal strife. Toward the latter end, Syria and Greece support the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey, and Syria has long harbored terrorists operating against Israel.

In economic terms the partnership has further spurred a growing trade relationship.[68] The defense industries of both parties are benefiting, and business is certain to grow to feed Turkey's modernization program. Israel has gained access to Central Asia, and Turkey may expand her export market to North America via Israel's free trade agreement with the United States.[69] As the region's only industrial democracies (and with complementary economies), Turkey and Israel's partnership is a natural in the economic realm.

Domestic support for the partnership is strong in Israel and growing in Turkey, having been bolstered by Israel's impressive humanitarian support for Turkey's earthquake victims in August of 1999.[70] Both countries have desired relations since the late 1940s, and initial returns on the budding partnership have done nothing to discourage the desire. Even the most ardent critics of pro-Western policy, former Islamicist President Necmettin Erbakan and the late ultranationalist Alparslan Turkes, were strong supporters of Turco-Israeli ties.[71] Historically, Turkish relations with the Jews have been more favorable than with the Arabs. The current partnership might be seen as the continuation of this trend.

Geopolitical Potential

The growing Turco-Israeli partnership has significant ramifications in terms of geopolitical influence and activity. This is true for Europe as well as in Central Asia and the Middle East.

Europe

After years of exclusion from the European club, Turkey has gained an alternative with a non-EU member—Israel.[72] Although the Israeli market for Turkey's exports is much smaller than the European market, the extended

market to North America, Central Asia, and the Caucasus brings new opportunities and a somewhat comfortable alternative—with significantly fewer strings attached. A continuation of her aggressive foreign policy may breed less reliance on Europe and more alternatives for Turkey, such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) project. Certainly the success of her bilateral relationship with Israel will bolster Turkey's self-image as a regional power and influence her propensity to act the part.

Central Asia and Russia

The Central Asian Turkic populations have historically looked to the Ottomans in Anatolia as the heart of Turkic ethnicity and culture. Although the cultural ties today have diminished greatly beyond the Caspian (only Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan are still closely linked), Turkey may still be in the best position to serve as a model for Central Asia—a prospect that deeply disturbs Russia.[73]

The former Soviet republics in Central Asia first made a move toward Turkey in 1991 and 1992 when the presidents of all six republics visited Turkish president Demirel.[74] As a result, the Turks signed hundreds of protocols to build infrastructure, particularly in Azerbaijan.[75] Israel's relations in Central Asia have been helped not only by her association with Turkey but also by a fair representation of Central Asian Jews in Israel. As a result, the republics have courted Israel independently to develop extensive ties.[76] The cultural and geopolitical dynamics work in favor of Turco-Israeli influence in the region.

Russia and Iran are the major competitors for influence in Central Asia. Russia's motive is to maintain influence in the Commonwealth of Independent States, although most of the republics are actively orienting away from her. The cultural divide between Russia and Central Asia is wide, but, in general, economic dependence keeps the republics in the Russian sphere.[77] Turkey and Israel have an opportunity to meet most needs in the region, energy being the glaring exception.

Iran is a competitor who can meet the energy needs of Central Asia. She actively pursues pipeline projects in the region to promote alternatives to Russia. Of all possible

competitors, Iran's influence is most worrisome for both Turkey and Israel. Turco-Iranian relations are lukewarm, and Iran and Israel are avowed enemies. Azerbaijan, a nation ethnically linked to Turkey but with a sizable Shiite population, will be a key area of competition for Turkey and Iran.[78]

Apart from ethnic ties, Turkey has a decided advantage over her competitors for Central Asia. Her ability to transform from a decayed empire to a modern, successful nation-state is admired in the region, as opposed to Russia's failures and Iran's anachronistic Islamicism. Turkey is also seen as a conduit to the West and particularly to the United States.[79] Building on these strengths, an aggressive foreign policy could have a significant impact in shaping Central Asia for Turkey (and Israel). Resource needs primarily keep the region tied to Iran and Russia, and competition between the two is likely to keep their influence in check.

Middle East

Turkey sees herself and Israel as models for the Middle East—secular, free-market democracies.[80] Since secularism and representative government threaten the institutional foundations of the Middle East, one can begin to understand why Turkey's relations in the Middle East have been ambivalent at best. The friendliest neighbor by far has been Jordan, with whom Israel advocated a Conference for Security and Cooperation in the Middle East (CSCME). Modeled after the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the CSCME was heartily endorsed by Turkey in 1994.[81] Turkey is developing bilateral relations with Jordan, and Israel maintains low-key relations based on common Palestinian and Iraqi threats.[82]

In addition to fostering closer ties between Syria, Iran, and Iraq, the alliance has helped open the Iraqi-Syrian border.[83] It has also emboldened Greece in her Middle East relations.[84] So, while a Turco-Israeli partnership has potential to stabilize the balance of power in the region, it could also be the source of great instability as the other nations align to counterbalance.[85] In reality, though, divi-

sion, self-interest, and limited capabilities in the Muslim world would likely render an Arab coalition impotent.

A more likely scenario is a coalition of Turkey, Israel, Jordan, some of the Gulf States, and possibly Egypt—all of which have ties to the United States and are threatened by Islamic extremists and rogue states in the region. This arrangement is a US vision for a new Middle East order with Turkey at the center.[86] The linchpin of such a pact would be some form of genuine rapprochement between Israel, the Palestinians, and probably Syria, which would allow the Muslim–Arab states to more easily align with Israel. The aforementioned Turco-Israeli water agreement could facilitate rapprochement and thus support the formation of the US-supported coalition.[87] Syria's ongoing talks with Israel and Iran's stated willingness to accept a peace deal are certainly positive indicators for an Israeli-Arab settlement.[88] This watershed event would both stabilize the region and legitimize the Turco-Israeli arrangement. Ironically, though, it would allow Syria to focus the predominance of her military force to the north—an unpleasant prospect for the Turks.

Economic Potential

Economic potential from the Turco-Israeli partnership can be characterized as bilateral and extended. Bilateral economic potential involves trade between the two, which exceeded $500 million in 1998. As Turkey begins to take delivery of military equipment, the numbers will rise substantially. Israel has also shown a willingness to import Turkish labor, which should return hard currency homeward.[89]

Extended trade includes cooperative trade with other countries, such as efforts in Azerbaijan and Central Asia. By extension, Turkey and Israel will gain ties to the West as well as to the developing world. The BSEC project and a newly revived Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)[90] provide linkage to some new trading partners for Turkey by membership and for Israel by association.

Ties with Israel affirm Turkey's focus to the West and away from the Arab world. Her Middle East trade (excluding Saudi Arabia) has dwindled for more than 10 years and

now represents just 12 percent of Turkish exports. Expanding economic ties between Israel and Turkey will strengthen a westward orientation, but with continued engagement in the region. This orientation will be fed by a need for Western (primarily US) aid and investment, as well as a need to serve as a conduit to the West in the developing world.

Beyond the Courtship

Will the courtship between Israel and Turkey result in a true bond? Common institutional interests, such as democratic and secular values, common orientations to the West, and a common sense of "otherness" in the region contribute to the relationship. Common security interests, such as the threat of terrorism and WMD, and common protagonists such as Greece, Iran, Iraq, and Syria also contribute to the bond. Domestic support for the relationship is important to both parties, but probably more influential in Turkey, where Near Eastern and Islamic sensitivities are stronger. As long as benefits of relationship are evident in the security and economic realms, domestic support should contribute to the bond. In Israel the regional alliance with Turkey meets one of three broad security strategy approaches. That bodes well for Israel's commitment to the relationship through thick and thin—a position she has essentially held since 1949.[91]

Developments in the Middle East have always shaped Turco-Israeli relations, so it should not be surprising that potential pitfalls for the budding partners lie in the region. Ironically, though both consider counterterrorism a top security issue, neither fully supports the counterterrorist politics of the other. Israel has never condemned the PKK. In fact, there is some pro-Kurdish sentiment in Israel, where the Kurds' situation is seen in parallel with the Jewish state's fight for a homeland.[92] Turkey recognizes Palestine and sympathizes with the Palestinian fight for a homeland in Israel.[93] Both parties do, however, condemn the state sponsors of terrorism.

Syria and Cyprus are other potential pitfalls. While Turkey considers Syria a regional foe, the Israelis are in the midst of

negotiating a peace settlement with that country. An increasingly conciliatory posture from Israel would certainly clash with Turkey's somewhat rigid approach. If called upon to support Turkey against Syria, Israel might be hesitant to alienate her neighbor at a sensitive juncture in their relations. Should Israel decide to collaborate with Turkey in such a scenario, the Turco-Israeli partnership would be strengthened, but at tremendous expense to regional stability.

Similarly, Cyprus is a highly volatile issue in Turkey. While Israel quietly supports Turkey's position, she also bristles at the comparisons of Turkey's occupation of northern Cyprus with Israel's occupation of the West Bank.[94] Warming Greek-Turkish relations and strong support from the United States and the EU are positive signs for an eventual settlement in Cyprus.[95] Such a settlement, a key ingredient for normalized Greek-Turkish relations,[96] could stabilize the region and remove a potential pitfall for Turco-Israeli relations. A potentially positive by-product would be improved Greek-Israeli relations, nurtured by a common friend in Turkey.

Perhaps the most critical potential pitfall is Israel's relations in the Arab world, specifically as they pertain to Palestine and Syria. How Israel handles these relations potentially shapes the Turco-Israeli relationship and the vision of a Turkey-centered regional security forum like the CSCME. Israel would be wise to pursue reasonable settlements with Palestine and Syria to promote the Turco-Israeli partnership and to foster stability in the region. Turkey would be wise to settle the Cyprus issue to similarly stabilize the region and legitimize her undisputed leadership therein.

Conclusion

The United States has gradually assumed the role of lead moderator from the Adriatic to the Caspian Seas.[97] Because of Turkey's prominent position in the political and geographical center of this arc of crisis, the Turco-Israeli partnership has important and wide-ranging national security implications for the US in the regions influenced by the partnership—namely, Europe, the Caucasus, Central

Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa. It should come as no surprise that US security interests served by the partnership reflect those of her allies, Turkey and Israel, but from a uniquely American perspective. For example, resolution of the Cyprus problem benefits Turkey politically and economically while eliminating a potential barrier to partnership with Israel.

From a US perspective, the greatest benefit of the Turco-Israeli partnership might be taken in context with a Turkish-Greek rapprochement. Because of the aforementioned zero-sum diplomacy of the two longtime adversaries, Greece and Turkey have developed relationships along opposite axes, the NATO alliance being the notable exception. A genuine partnership would potentially blend those axes, promoting symbiotic relationships between Albania, Macedonia, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria in the Balkans, Azerbaijan and Armenia in the Caucasus, and Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon (and possibly Iran and Iraq) in the Middle East. In the latter case, the benefits of a Turco-Israeli partnership are magnified considerably when Turkey and Greece (with her Arab ties) settle their differences.[98] The prospect of regional stability on such a grand scale (i.e., from southeastern Europe to the Caucasus to the Middle East) would be exceedingly attractive to the United States. Such far-reaching stability would likely allow her to extract a considerable "peace dividend," given the sizable US physical and material investment in the greater region.[99]

Embarking on an aggressive foreign policy, Turkey has emerged as a leader in the arc of crisis and the Middle East. She has also developed a unique partnership with Israel that stands to strengthen her leadership position, help her economy grow, and enhance her security in an unstable part of the world. There is significant psychological importance attached to Israel's partnership with a Muslim state. As Turkey has shown the world that a Muslim state can be a modern, secular democracy, she can now model the partnership of a Muslim state and the Jewish state of Israel. Perhaps a successful Turco-Israeli partnership, combined with Israeli settlements with Palestine and Syria, will draw these states to follow Turkey's lead. The implications for regional stability are tremendous.

Notes

1. "International Relations," *Sage Public Administration Abstracts* 25, no. 4 (January 1999): 554.

2. Ibid.; and Henri J. Barkey, ed., *Reluctant Neighbor: Turkey's Role in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996), 155.

3. Amikam Nachmani, *Israel, Turkey and Greece: Uneasy Relations in the Eastern Mediterranean* (Totowa, N.J.: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., 1987), 46.

4. Ibid., 44.

5. Ibid., 44–45; Barkey, 160; and Daniel Pipes, "A New Axis: The Emerging Turkish-Israeli Entente," *National Interest*, Winter 1997–1998: 31–38. Turkey simultaneously exchanged ministers with and extended recognition to the state of Palestine.

6. Barkey, 148.

7. Gil Dibner, "My Enemy's Enemy: Turkey, Israel and the Middle Eastern Balance of Power," *Harvard International Review* 21, no. 1 (Winter 1998–1999): 34–39. This special relationship eventually extended to shared intelligence about the West and other parts of the world. It transitioned from the covert to the public realms when Turkish president Tansu Ciller and Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres formalized the relationship in 1996.

8. Nachmani, 3–4.

9. Ibid., 61.

10. Ibid., 43–44, 62–63.

11. Ibid., 76.

12. Barkey, 150.

13. Israel consistently refused to take a clear anticommunist stance out of fear of retribution against the substantial Jewish population in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

14. Turkey was accepted as a NATO member in 1951.

15. Nachmani, 49.

16. Ibid., 44, 46. The Israelis should have understood the power of Turkish secularism three years earlier, when the Turkish weekly, *Sebil-urresad*, was banned and its editor jailed for linking Ataturk to ties with Israel and attacking him as the "scourge of Islam." The lightning response from Turkish authorities showed the impotence of Islamicism and the strength of secularism in the republic.

17. Ibid., 61.

18. Ibid., 43.

19. Ibid., 51. Turkey's post-Korean War vacillations portended the flexibility Israel would need to exert to maintain good relations with Turkey. The Turks saw the US as a declining power after her performance in Korea. After reassessing their reliance on the United States, the Turks began to lean to the United Kingdom as a preferred partner in the Middle East. As their preference for Israel's sponsor waned, relations with Israel dipped accordingly. Shortly thereafter, the Turks again assessed the geopolitical situation and realized they could only really count on the United States for support in the region. As a result, they imposed re-

strictions on the Arabs for their neutrality during the war and rewarded Israel's support with her first commercial treaty.

20. Ibid., 65.

21. American ambassador George Wadsworth helped the Arabs because of his open hatred for Israeli minister Sasson. The Israelis effectively removed Wadsworth by quietly exposing his alcoholism and unfitness to serve.

22. Ibid., 65–66.

23. Ibid., 90, 106, 113. The UN ambassador from Greece proclaimed in 1954: "We are like a seventh Arab state." The growth of Greek-Arab relationships is indicated by a 1984 quote from the *London Times* that "Greece is the only Arab country to have helped the Palestinians."

24. Ibid., 87–88. The Greeks confiscated two newly purchased Israeli fighter jets in transit from Eastern Europe and put them to use against communist insurgents in their own country.

25. Ibid., 89, 94. Even gestures of friendship were snubbed. Israel volunteered four naval vessels to relieve earthquake victims on the Greek Islands in 1953. The Greek government officially rejected the offer after crews had already begun work. The crews were warmly welcomed by the people on their arrival in Athens, but not one government official was on hand to greet them.

26. Ibid., 118.

27. Ibid., 54–55, 68, 99.

28. Barkey, 150.

29. Nachmani, 74–75.

30. Ibid., 5–7.

31. Ibid., 49, 52.

32. Ibid., 50.

33. Ibid., 43.

34. Ibid., 57.

35. Lingering distrust of Turkish intentions, rooted in centuries of Ottoman dominance and occupation, also contributed to Arab aloofness in relations with Turkey.

36. Barkey, 148–50, 163.

37. Pipes, 32.

38. Nachmani, 43, 77.

39. Ibid., 77.

40. Ibid.

41. Barkey, 150–51; Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser, *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1993), 52. Arab trade came with significant political strings attached. State trade policy and the policies of dominant leaders (e.g., Libya's Qaddafi, dominated trade patterns in lieu of market forces). Markets in the Arab world were virtually unpredictable, and commercial ventures were quite risky.

42. Barkey, 163.

43. Ibid., 150, 163. Turkey was still concerned that open relations would offend Arab sensitivities.

44. Turkey was the last NATO member to establish full relations with Israel. Even Greece, the "enemy of Israel," had established relations.

45. Ibid., 151.

46. During the visit, Ciller favorably compared Ben-Gurion and Ataturk as founding fathers of their countries—an analogy that didn't gain much popularity at home.

47. Barkey, 151–52; Pipes, 32; "Weizman Visits Turkey," *Presidents & Prime Ministers* 3, no. 4 (July–August 1994): 36.

48. Vassilis Alexandris, "Israel to Deliver Upgraded Jets to Turkey," *Thrace List Archive*, Democritus University of Thrace, 3 February 1999, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.duth.gr/maillist-archives/thrace/tl51/msg00024.html.

49. Dibner, 19, 26, 38; "Fast Facts," *Navy Times* 49, no. 12 (27 December 1999): 2. The naval exercises, dubbed Reliant Mermaid, included the US Navy. Jordan's naval commander observed the 1998 and 2000 exercises. Egypt was also invited to observe the exercises, but declined in deference to strong Arab protests of perceived aggression prior to the 1998 exercise. Their ambivalence toward the January 2000 exercise indicated growing Arab acceptance of Muslim-Israeli military cooperation—a development that bodes well for Egypt's eventual participation.

50. Ibid., 37.

51. Ibid., 35.

52. John Tirman, "Improving Turkey's 'Bad Neighborhood': Pressing Ankara for Rights and Democracy," *World Policy Journal* 15, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 60–67; "Israeli Premier Visits Turkey," The *New York Times* on the Web, 25 October 1999, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/i/AP-Turkey-Israel.html; Pipes, 34; John D. Morrocco and Metehan Demir, "Turkey, Israel Deepen Industrial, Defense Ties," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 148, no. 3 (19 January 1998): 26; "News Breaks," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 148, no. 2 (12 January 1998): 385; Metehan Demir, "Turkey Short-Lists Three Helicopters," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 152, no. 11 (13 March 2000): 32.

53. "Israel, Turkey Discuss Deals," The *New York Times* on the Web, 26 October 1999, n.p., on-line, Internet, available from http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/i/AP-Turkey-Israel.html; Pipes, 34; Metehan Demir, "Turkish-Israeli Military Ties Shake Middle East," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 146, no. 26 (23 June 1997): 35; Gerald M. Steinberg, *Mediterranean Security into the Coming Millennium*, ed. Stephen J. Blank (Carlisle, Penn.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 1999), 356–57.

54. Demir, "Turkey Short-Lists Three Helicopters," 32. The Ka-50-2, produced jointly by Israel Aircraft Industries and Russia's Kamov, recently survived the first cut, along with Bell Helicopter Textron's AH-1Z Cobra and Augusta's A-129 International. Boeing's AH-64D Longbow Apache and the Eurocopter Tiger were eliminated from competition.

55. Dibner, 35.

56. Ibid., 36; "Israel, Turkey Discuss Deals"; and David Pryce-Jones, "Turkey's New Day: Power Politics Changes in the Middle East," *National Review* 51, no. 4 (8 March 1999): 34.

57. Pryce-Jones, 34.

58. Scott Peterson, "Eager for Closer Israel Ties, Turkey Turns Up the Charm," *Christian Science Monitor*, 10 July 1998; Dibner, 36–37.

59. Steinberg, 354, 357.

60. Dibner, 35. The loss of the West Bank and the Golan Heights would seriously restrict her access to already scarce water resources.

61. Dibner, 36; Scott Peterson, "Turkey's Plan for Mideast Peace," *Christian Science Monitor*, 18 April 2000. The Manavgat River spills approximately 4.5 billion cubic meters of water into the Mediterranean annually. Jordan is extremely interested in purchasing Manavgat water to meet her projected shortages and Turkey is counting on others in the region—Syria, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Tunisia, and Algeria—to eventually follow suit. The project is potentially lucrative for Turkey. With expected annual revenues of $300 million, the investment costs would be covered in less than half a year.

62. Peterson, "Turkey's Plan for Mideast Peace."

63. "Turkey and Israel," *Presidents and Prime Ministers* 3, no. 5 (September–October 1994): 34.

64. Barkey, 155.

65. Editorial, "Bright Stars Over the Near East," *Christian Science Monitor*, 20 December 1999. The United States continues to push the European Union (EU)—particularly Germany—to recognize Turkey's Cold War loyalty and pivotal geopolitical role with EU membership.

66. Ibid., 152–53.

67. Malik Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* 52, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 35.

68. Barkey, 163.

69. Pipes, 34.

70. Stephen Kinzer, "Turkey Finds Quake Brings Improved Ties to Neighbors," *New York Times*, Sunday, 30 January 2000, sec. 3. Medical support, both on-scene and in Israel, was particularly noteworthy.

71. Barkey, 161–62.

72. Kevin Whitelaw and Carey W. English, "Unwelcome, They Find Each Other," *U.S. News and World Report* 124, no. 1 (12 January 1998): 36; Kerin Hope, "Earthquake Diplomacy," *Europe*, November 1999, 22–24; Mike Theodoulou, "Will Greece-Turkey Thaw Trickle Down to Cyprus?" *Christian Science Monitor*, 1 February 2000; Peterson, "Eager for Closer Israel Ties, Turkey Turns Up the Charm." As a result of the recent warming in Greek-Turkish relations, Greece has dropped her longstanding opposition to Turkey's EU membership. Relating to Turkey's eventual EU membership, Greek foreign minister George Papandreou asserted that "Greece must be the cart pulling Turkey toward Europe."

73. Gulnur Aybet, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Its Implications for the West* (Whitehall, London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1994), 43; and Vojtech Mastny and Craig R. Nation, eds., *Turkey Between East and West* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, Inc., 1996), 105.

74. Aybet, 143.

75. Mastny and Nation, 105.

76. Kemal H. Karpat, ed., *Turkish Foreign Policy: Recent Developments* (Madison, Wisc.: International Journal of Turkish Studies, University of Wisconsin, 1996), 110; Mastny and Nation, 105; Mufti, 35.

77. Mastny and Nation, 103–4, 106.
78. Ibid., 106.
79. Karpat, 104, 115.
80. Peterson, "Eager for Closer Israel Ties."
81. Barkey, 157–58.
82. Steinberg, 359.
83. Pryce-Jones, 34.
84. Ibid., 35; Mufti, 40.
85. "A New and Bitter Brew in the Middle East," *Economist* 349, no. 8089 (10 October 1998): 43–44. For example, when Syria faced a possible Turkish invasion in 1996, they called on mutual defense pacts with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Libya. The broader implications of these defense pacts offer possibilities for American, Greek, and Iranian intervention by virtue of association.
86. Steinberg, 360; Dibner, 38.
87. Peterson, "Turkey's Plan for Mideast Peace." Water sharing was a key ingredient in Israel's 1994 peace treaty with Jordan. A supplementary supply from Turkey could similarly be a key ingredient in prospective treaties with both Syria and Palestine.
88. Stanley Reed and Neal Sandler, "Why Syria's Assad May Be Ready to Deal," *Business Week*, 26 July 1999, 50.
89. Barkey, 164–65; Pipes, 35. Tourism is picking up between the new partners. Turkey is a choice destination for Israeli travelers, and Israeli tourism accounted for $400 thousand in 1998. Turkish Airlines has also become the second largest carrier to Tel Aviv.
90. Fuller and Lesser, 157; Karpat, 102; Mastny and Nation, 106. The BSEC includes Turkey, Greece, Albania, Romania, Russia, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Ukraine. The ECO consists of the original members: Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran; and new members: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—a common market of 300 million people.
91. Steinberg, 350.
92. Barkey, 166.
93. Ibid., 160. In fact, much to the chagrin of the Israelis, Turkish president Ciller visited Yassir Arafat in Gaza and the PLO's unofficial headquarters at Orient House in East Jerusalem during her 1994 visit to Israel.
94. Nachmani, 105.
95. Theodoulou, 7.
96. Ibid.
97. "Clinton Props Up the Old World," *Economist* 353, no. 8147 (27 November 1999): 51–52.
98. Theodoulou, 7. Turkey and Greece have traditionally viewed one another's political maneuvers in the Balkans (and elsewhere) from a zero-sum perspective. The complications from Turkish and Greek competition in that volatile region are explosive. Conversely, genuine rapprochement and partnership in the Balkans would eliminate a potential powder keg.
99. For the United States, a Cyprus resolution supports genuine rapprochement between two NATO allies and stabilizes the southeastern flank of the alliance. Turkey benefits from a strong leadership role in Cen-

tral Asia and Israel gains access via her partner. US interests are met by Turkey serving as a proxy voice for democracy, stability, and open markets in the region.